• COLORADO RIVER •

AQUEDUCT NEWS

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Vol. XI October 31, 1944 No. 10

The Colorado River, below Parker Dam, photographed on October 3, 1944—a regulated, dependable stream. Before construction of Boulder and Parker dams, the unregulated flow of the Colorado often fluctuated between devastating floods in summer and a trickling, inadequate flow in September and October. Mexico suffered as well as United States communities. Boulder Dam and Parker Dam, being paid for by Californians, now give Mexico, as well as United States, a regulated and assured water supply. But a proposed Mexican treaty now pending in the U. S. Senate would take these great river regulating and storage works, being paid for by Californians, and use them to give for all time to Mexico, twice as much water as she ever could or did obtain before Boulder Dam—water which the Federal Government had pledged itself to make available to communities within the United States.

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THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
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Published monthly in the interest of Field and Office Workers on the Colorado River Aqueduct, and for the information of all other citizens of the Metropolitan Water District.

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Early Day Theatre Now District Garage

Erected in the late 80's as one of Los Angeles' finest theatres, a stout brick building at 128 East Third Street was acquired by the District in October, and will be used as a garage for the Los Angeles headquarters.

For a number of years before the turn of the century, the structure bore the proud name of Empire Theatre. Behind its footlights passed such great stars as Lillian Russell, Maude Adams and the immortal Sarah Barnhardt. Early in the 1900's the house ceased to operate as a legitimate theatre and became one of the first motion picture palaces in Los Angeles. For the past 20 years or more the brick building has been used as a public garage.

The building was erected on a corner of the ground once occupied by the family home of Cameron E. Thom. The Thom home at Third and Main streets, back in the 70's and 80's, was recognized as one of the city's show places. The buildings and ground purchased by the District remained in the Thom estate until December 1940, when it was acquired by Andrew Pansini from whom it was bought by the District.

Cameron Thom was a Virginian who came to California as a young attorney in the 50's. At the outbreak of the Civil War he joined the Confederate forces and rose to the rank of captain. Returning to Los Angeles in 1865, he resumed the practice of law and became one of the towns most distinguished citizens. From 1882 to 1884 he was mayor of Los Angeles.

Fronting 60 feet on Third Street, the building is 150 feet deep and sets on a lot 170 feet deep. The property was taken over by the District for a consideration of $23,500.

For the past several years the District's Los Angeles headquarters garage has been located in rented space at Fourth and Olive streets.

• MONTHLY REPORT •

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a brief summary of some of the activities of the District as set forth in the monthly report of General Manager Julian Hinds, filed with the Board of Directors in October, 1944, covering work done in September, 1944.)

Construction

Salt Storage Basin—The contractor on the construction of salt storage basin No. 3 at the softening and filtration plant, completed excavation September 9, started erecting forms and setting reinforcement steel, and at the end of the month had placed concrete in the floor and lower part of the walls of the basin.

Operation and Maintenance

General—District units N-5 and N-6, at Boulder, operated 93.4 per cent of the time in September to supply the power requirements of the District, Basic Magnesium, Inc., and Parker interchange. The maximum power demand of Basic Magnesium, Inc., during the month was 92,762 kw. Total energy delivered to B. M. I. was 60,871,500 kwhr, a daily average of 1,963,600 kwhr, compared with 2,133,109 in August.

Parker Dam—Water level in Lake Havasu was lowered from full reservoir on September 1 to 448.5 feet on September 13, and held near that level for the remainder of the month. The flow of the Colorado River at Parker Dam averaged 18,177 cfs in September, compared with 18,714 in August.

Parker Power Plant—The Parker power system was in parallel with the District system continuously except for a 13-minute period on September 28. Energy delivered to the Parker system during the month was 6,863,085 kwhr and energy received from it 3,678,000 kwhr. Parker system power is being transmitted to the Indian Service at Parker, to Hillside for copper mining, to Salt River Valley, Tucson, Gila Valley, and Yuma, in Arizona; and to Imperial Valley in California.

Main Aqueduct—The main aqueduct was patrolled regularly and miscellaneous maintenance work was performed in the course of patrol trips. Reservoirs and standing water in canal sections were inspected frequently and several transitions and canal sections were spot-treated with copper sulphate for algae control.

Pumping Plants—The pumping plants were operated continuously from September 13 to 25, inclusive, to deliver water to Lake Mathews. Normal maintenance work was carried on at all points.

Distribution System—A 200 cfs flow of Colorado River water was received at Lake Mathews between September 17 and 26. The surface elevation in the reservoir on September 30 was 1,338.51 feet, and available water in storage was 69,847 acre feet. Decrease in storage during the month was 594 ac-ft and drop in water level 0.36 foot. Flow through the softening and filtration plant averaged 67 cfs, or 43,303,000 gallons per day compared with 46,754,000 in August. The hardness of the water was reduced from an average of 363 to 100 ppm in the softening process. Chemical, bacteriological, and plankton analyses were made of water samples from numerous points on the main aqueduct and distribution system. During the month softened water in varying quantities was delivered to all constituent areas except Glendale, San Marino and Torrance.

Office Engineering and Design—In connection with construction of salt storage basin No. 3 at the softening and filtration plant, manufacturer's shop drawings of fabricated metalwork were checked and a schedule prepared to facilitate identification and assembly of metalwork in the structure, and inspection was completed of the reinforcement steel fabricated in a local shop.

Hydrographic—Regular and special meetings of the Colorado River Board of California were attended, the water treaty with Mexico being the chief matter under discussion. Available storage in Lake Mead on September 30 was 22,864,000 ac-ft with the water level at elevation 1187.12 feet. This is a decrease since August 31 of 6.8 feet in water level and 954,000 acre feet in storage. The discharge of the Colorado River at Boulder Dam averaged 18,245 cfs, compared with 19,584 in August.

Employment—In September, 7 classified positions were filled, and 1 transfer, 1 change of status, 11 terminations, 7 employment contracts and 66 interviews were recorded.

Purchasing—During September there were issued 170 purchase orders in the amount of approximately $12,320.00. Freight forwardings consisted of one car of aluminum sulphate, one car of chlorine, and 92 cars of sodium chloride to the softening plant. Cash salvage sales for the month amounted to $1,844.50. The appraised value of salvage stock on hand at the end of the month was $264,480.16.

Nevada Governor and State Engineer Strongly Oppose Mexican Water Treaty

Nevada's Colorado River Commission, speaking through its Chairman, Governor E. P. Carville, and its State Engineer, Alfred Merritt Smith, has issued a statement denouncing the proposed water treaty with Mexico and urging that it be not ratified by the United States Senate.

The following, in part, is the Nevada declaration against the pending treaty:

In response to requests from the press for a public statement from the Colorado River Commission of Nevada relative to the proposed treaty with Mexico for division of the waters of the Colorado River, the Tijuana River and the Rio Grande, the following is submitted as reflecting the position of that commission, which is entrusted with the responsibility of administering the state's interest in the Colorado River.

The possibility of a trade with Mexico, whereby more Rio Grande waters might be available to the United States in return for greater use of the Colorado was feared by the Colorado River basin states, but negotiations of this sort have been denied by the Department of State. There are three elemental reasons why the Colorado River Commission of Nevada opposes this treaty, which are:

1. The treaty effects a surrender of rights of the interested states to properly control and administer the Colorado River and is a further encroachment of the Federal Government on the authority of states to develop, use and regulate their own water resources.

2. The quantity of water to be delivered to Mexico is much in excess of the amount used prior to construction of Boulder Dam and related works, and is more than the quantity which Mexico has either a moral or an international right to demand.

3. The government has no right, by means of this treaty, to place in jeopardy or to make more difficult of fulfillment, the contracts for water and power its states have made with it in good faith and relying upon the validity of the Colorado River Compact and the Boulder Canyon Project Act.

Commenting upon these reasons: The treaty proposes to establish a new political river control to be known as the International Boundary and Water Commission, which will enforce the terms of the treaty. This Commission will have status as an international body and consist of two sections, one Mexican and one United States, each of which shall be headed by an Engineer Commissioner. These two men shall have diplomatic privileges for work in each country. It is a joint International Commission with absolute and complete control of the river for enforcement of delivery of water to Mexico, without reference to the affected states, or to the Congress, in making rules and provisions for control and administration of Colorado River waters. The Commission may authorize the construction of dams, weirs, diversion works, may regulate existing storage reservoirs and diversion at will, and its acts are subject to no review by any Federal or State agency while this treaty is in effect.

We sympathize with California, which has the most to lose under this autocratic plan. California financed, entirely alone, the great Boulder Dam and its vast appurtenant and related works. . . Under this proposed Mexican treaty, California's ability to fulfill its legal obligations to repay and make good on its contracts is in danger, for neither that state, nor the United States, will have final control of storage and diversions. That power will be in the hands of the joint Mexican-United States Commission, and 1,500,000 to 1,700,000 acre-feet must be delivered annually to Mexico, regardless of whether low flows or varying and diversified irrigation demands deplete the minimum quantity necessary to irrigate lands reclaimed in the United States, or if arbitrary regulations for storage and diversion decrease the available power contracted for delivery to the people. Although the treaty contains a provision that in times of "extraordinary" drought deliveries to Mexico will be proportionately curtailed, this does not alter the fact that at all times excessive water is guaranteed to Mexico, water that will be needed for the present use and future development of our own country. . . .

The upstream states, by now advocating control of the river by a U. S.-Mexican Commission, whose acts are not subject to review by Congress or by the courts and also by advocating a gift to Mexico of water made available to the basin by Federal money which California and Nevada must repay, make it more difficult for these states to supply them with the very funds they use for upper Colorado River surveys and developments. . . .

At a meeting of the Colorado River Basin States Committee of 14 held at Reno, Nevada in July 1944, it was shown by statements and estimates of upstream future water consumption submitted by engineers of the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation and the U. S. Office of Indian Affairs that contemplated uses upstream exceed the compact allotment. . . . We hold that Mexico is not entitled to assured delivery of more water than the natural unregulated flow of the river would have irrigated in Mexico before the construction of Boulder Dam, which is probably less than 750,000 acre-feet. . . .

The American Section of the International Water Commission, United States and Mexico, in a report to Congress in 1930 subscribed to by Elwood Mead, Director of Reclamation, General Lansing H. Beach, U. S. A., Retired, and W. E. Anderson of Texas, stated: "***The location of the Mexican land at the lower end of the river gives it for all time control and use of all the surplus flow. Both ability to use this surplus and also relief from the chief danger from destructive floods, will be promoted by the construction of Boulder Dam. The proposal of the American Section to recommend recognizing as a reasonable equity an annual use of 750,000 acre feet, this being the greatest amount heretofore used in one year, is all that it is believed the United States should concede. . . ."

Our duty to Mexico calls for nothing more or less than fair treatment. We are not obligated to supply her with a resource created by the money of our people. Mexico is entitled to no more than an annual delivery of 750,000 a. f., which is the maximum quantity of water used or that could have been used from the Colorado River before the construction of Boulder Dam. The control of the river effected by Boulder Dam is of exceedingly great value to Mexico as a means of seasonal irrigation regulation and flood control, for which she is charged nothing. Her irrigated lands, diversion works and canals are now forever protected from damage or destruction by floods, equally with those within the United States. The great structures which accomplish this were entirely financed and built by the people of the United States, and no portion of the benefits to be derived from them should be voluntarily given away by treaty.

NEWS FROM FIELD AND OFFICE

Samuel A. Wilson, Gardener at the Softening and Filtration Plant, is a veteran of the battle of the San Jacinto tunnel. A resident of Fullerton, in 1935 he joined the ranks of those hard rock miners who drove through one of the world's toughest tunnel jobs. There he worked as Jackhammerman, Miner Chucktender, Pumpman, Motorman, and Mechanic.

MWD Aqueducters understand there's a Sixth War Loan coming up. They are ready, willing and eager to reach down into the old sock—and do their full part, and maybe a little more. One old-timer out on the desert end of the aqueduct spoke pretty much for all District employees when he said:

"Well, I guess all of us stiffs at home know what's going on, anyway. We know there's about 11,000,000 of America's finest signed up to give their lives, if need be. And a lot of them have. They're in Burma, China, Africa, Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, on a hundred islands in the Pacific, and, yes, they're in Germany and the Philippines too. And they're slugging it out with millions of savage, two-legged rats. They know the war isn't over. And they need plenty of stuff to keep them going.

"Incidentally, there's some darn good pals of ours out there taking it on the chin right now. And it looks like Uncle Sam has given us a pretty good break when he invites us to pitch in a little and help back up those fighting men."

Based on information recently received, the following overseas mailing addresses of former District employees and those on military leave are herewith given, in addition to the list that appeared in the September issue of the NEWS:

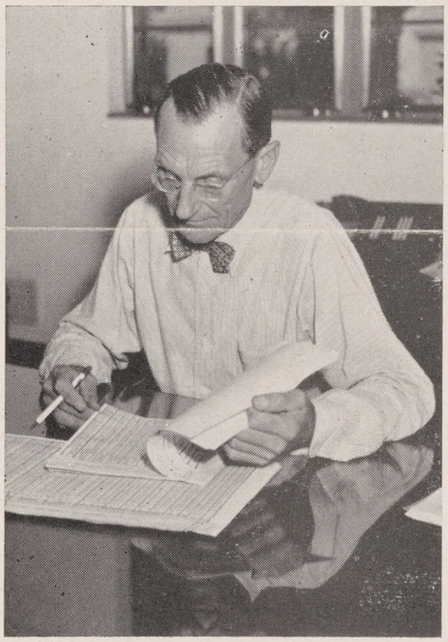
Lieut. John P. Densmore, CEC, USNR, 43rd Constr. Battn., Fleet P. O., San Francisco, Calif.

Lt. Arthur E. Graham, 0924032, 1054th Engrs., PC&R Group, APO 920, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Calif.

EM 2/C Carl Klose, ABCD, Navy 128, Fleet P. O., San Francisco, Calif.

Cpl. Walter Napier, 37107275, Company B, Engineers G (S) 176, APO 980, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Calif.

It looks like MWD employees are in their usual good form. Controller J. M. Luney at the end of October was able to report on War Chest contributions thus far received from 55 per cent of the employees. These first returns revealed that nearly 100 per cent of the Chest quota for District employees already had been subscribed, and, in a large part, paid in cash.



Superintendent Ralph C. Davis at the Softening and Filtration Plant probably will be annoyed when and if he sees this photo. (Photographers say he doesn't like to have his picture taken—so they slip up on him.) So, here he is engrossed in tabulations of acre feet, etc.

Meet Lee Roy Avett, Cook at Gene Camp out yonder at the east end of the aqueduct. Here, Staff Photographer Walter Winzell has caught Cook Avett in the act of removing from the oven luscious loaves of bread destined soon to be consumed by hearty trenchermen at the camp mess. His hobby is the searching out, cutting and polishing of semiprecious stones, and the rugged Whipple mountain country provides him with much happy hunting.

By authority of the Board of Directors, on October 30 there was submitted to the employees of the District the question of whether they wish to participate in the State Employees Retirement System. By their sealed ballots, which are to be received by the Executive Secretary of the Board up to November 9, the employees will determine the issue.

Under the proposed system the employees would contribute along with the District to a fund which would provide certain disability and death benefits and retirement compensation.

District employees this month were deeply grieved by the death of Eugene L. Falkenburg, Assistant Superintendent of Pumping Plants. Gene was mortally stricken by a heart attack in Mexico City on Oct. 9, while on a vacation trip. Father of a famous family, he was known to hundreds of Aqueducters and was held in the highest esteem by all. He had been with the District since June 1933.